PURPOSE AND CHARGE

The General Education Outcomes Forum II (GEO Forum II) adopted the following purpose statement.

> "Through the general education core curriculum, students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world; develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse global world; and cultivate advanced intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning." ~Adopted by the Texas Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee

The THECB approved the following core competencies for all Texas institutions of higher education: Critical Thinking, Communication Skills, Teamwork, Empirical & Quantitative Skills, Social Responsibility and Personal Responsibility. These core competencies, although not required in every course in the core, must be present and taught throughout the curriculum in such a way that when a student receives their Associate's Degree or is Core Complete, they will have demonstrated competencies in these six areas.

To ensure teaching and learning of the general education core competencies, assessment of core competencies, although course-embedded, will occur at the institutional level. This faculty-driven process will be overseen by the Core Objectives Assessment Team (COAT). COAT, a district-wide faculty committee is charged with making recommendations for measures, including the development and maintenance of rubrics, serving as a sounding board for assessment logistics, consulting with faculty on assessment issues, conducting core assessments of student artifacts outside of courses as well as making recommendations for improvements needed based on assessment results.

PROCESS OF ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION CORE CURRICULUM

- Originally, the pilot began with a schedule in which student learning in two of the six THECB core objectives would be assessed each long semester. In spring 2012, communication skills and critical thinking skills were piloted. In fall 2012, teamwork and empirical/quantitative skills were assessed. In spring 2013, visual communication, social

responsibility and personal responsibility were assessed. The cycle was then to begin again and continue forward in that fashion; however, COAT determined that the general education competencies should be assessed three per year and a new cycle was begun.

- The assessment sample will rotate through high-enrollment Core courses that will be identified at the beginning of each assessment cycle. A total of at least 150-200 artifacts will be generated for each of the three core objectives intended for assessment in the given long semester. Each semester, the sample will include a variety of modalities and campuses to ensure a quality sample across the curriculum.

- Faculty whose courses have been chosen to participate in the assessment process will be notified and given the appropriate Collin College Core Objectives Rubrics. All Collin College Core Objective Rubrics will be available online.

- Faculty/Departments may choose any type of measure for the assessment as long as it meets the criteria for the Core Objective being assessed. The assignment is one that also will be used by the instructor as part of the student's grade in the course.

- Artifacts will be assessed by Collin faculty members of the Core Objectives Assessment Team.

- Assessments will be based on rubrics developed by Collin faculty members for the purpose of assessing student attainment of the state's core objectives.

- COAT will be responsible to oversee implementation of the assessment process, to train assessors, and to maintain the rubrics.

- Prior to each assessment cycle, COAT faculty members who conduct the assessment will be trained in the use of the rubrics by someone with extensive experience with the use of rubrics and holistic grading for assessment purposes.

- Faculty members who rate student artifacts related to the empirical and quantitative skills core objective should be specialized in disciplines related to the core objective and must complete the requisite training referred to in the previous bulleted item. For the other five core objectives, faculty members who rate student artifacts should be faculty members who complete the requisite training.

- Members of COAT will serve three-year terms with 1/3 of the committee rolling over each year beginning fall 2013.

- New members will be recommended by COAT to the Associate Vice President for Teaching and Learning. The AVP will then make recommendations to the Deans. After Dean approval, new members will begin their appointments each fall semester.
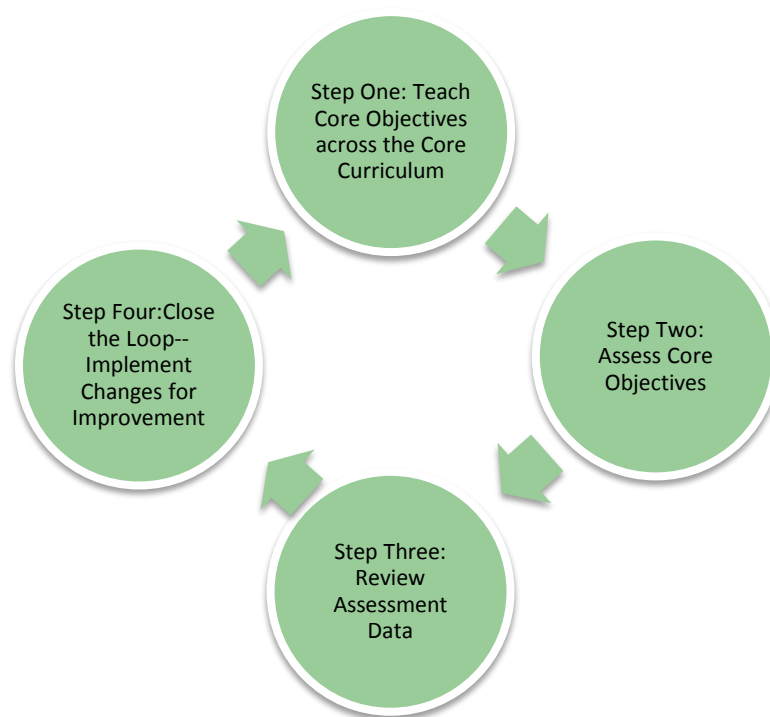
SUMMARY

PILOT CYCLE: FALL 2012 & SPRING 2013

Collin College began piloting the aforementioned process during spring 2012 and continued through spring 2013. The results of the spring 2012 assessment may be accessed in a different report. The competencies assessed for the pilot for fall 2012 were Teamwork and Empirical & Quantitative Skills

Table 1: COAT Assessment Summary Fall 2012 Pilot

Core Objective	Measures	Modalities	# Sections Assessed	# (Expected) Students Assessed
Teamwork	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Variety of Campuses	15	398
Empirical & Quantitative Skills	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Honors, Variety of Campuses	19	636

* Measures are determined by faculty within their departments. Departments decide whether to choose a single measure or to allow multiple measures for the assessment. All assessments are course imbedded.

The following high-enrollment core courses were chosen for the fall 2012 pilot:

Core Objective	Courses Chosen
Empirical & Quantitative Skills	PSYC 2301(viii)
	MATH 1342(ii)
Teamwork	BIOL 2401 (iii) ARTS 1301 (v)

Table 2: COAT Assessment Summary Spring 2013 Pilot

Core Objective	Measures	Modalities	# Sections Assessed	# (Expected) Students Assessed
Social Responsibility	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Variety of Campuses	64	1000
Personal Responsibility	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Honors, Variety of Campuses	142	3000
Visual Communication	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Honors, Variety of Campuses	20	400

The following high-enrollment core courses were chosen for the spring 2013 pilot:

Core Objective	Courses Chosen
Social Responsibility	ECON 2302(viii) PHIL 1301(iv)
Personal Responsibility	HIST1302 (vi) PHIL1301(iv)
Visual Communication	GEOL 1403(iii)

At the end of the fall 2012 and spring 2013 semesters, faculty sent copies of student artifacts to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Artifact submissions were to be assessed on the following General Education competencies: Empirical & Quantitative Skills, Visual Communication, Teamwork, Social Responsibility and Personal Responsibility. Based on the recommendations set forth in 2011 by the General Education Outcomes Forum II and the procedures put in place by the Core Objectives Assessment Team, faculty members who rate student artifacts related to the empirical and quantitative skills core objective should be specialized in disciplines related to the core objective and must complete the requisite training.

Empirical and Quantitative Skills

A small group of COAT members who specialized in the disciplines being assessed met to assess the Empirical & Quantitative skills using the faculty-generated rubric. The group determined that the assessment was null due to no assignment alignment with the rubric. The recommendation was made that a protocol would be needed prior to the next assessment of Empirical and Quantitative skills. COAT continues to stress the need for faculty to align their measures with the rubrics.

Visual Communication

After much discussion regarding written, oral and visual communication for the general competency, Communication Skills, COAT determined during the spring of 2013 to combine the three rubrics into a single rubric to assess Communication Skills. Written Communication and Oral Communication were piloted during the spring of 2012 using individual rubrics. Due to the rubric change, COAT decided not to assess the Visual Communication artifacts IE received during spring 2013. COAT recommended these be used for training purposes regarding assignment alignment and inter-rater reliability.

Social Responsibility

After an inter-rater reliability training session, members of COAT rated student artifacts using the faculty-generated rubrics for the Core Objectives: Social Responsibility and Personal Responsibility. GOAL:

> COAT proposed that 70% of students assessed should rate, on a scale of 1-4, a 3 or above for each criterion listed on the Core Objective Rubrics.

The following tables show the percentages per criterion for Social Responsibility and Personal Responsibility as assessed in spring 2013:

Table 3: Social Responsibility Summary

N=197 papers	Inter-rater	Social Responsibility					Met
Categories	Reliability	Rating					Standard
		1	2	3	4		
Intercultural Competence	95%	19%	30%	30%	22%		52%
Civic Responsibility	82%	16%	26%	33%	25%		58%
Global Engagement	66%	22%	24%	28%	27%		55%
Overall	81%						

Goal: 70% of students assessed will rate a 3 (on a scale of 1-4) or higher for each criterion

Result: Goal per criterion not met

Continuous Improvement

- Inter-Rater Reliability Issues

  - Committee members discussed that the lower scores could be related to inter-rater reliability issues rather than student performance. During the training session, it wasn't made clear what to do in the instances where the assignment didn't meet certain criterion. Throughout the assessment session faculty continued to ask about artifacts that didn't align with the measure.

- Rubric Clean-up

  - The initial use of the rubric proved to be cumbersome due to the wording of part of the definition "engage effectively in regional, national and global communities." COAT members argue that this too led to an issue with Inter-rater reliability. Members agreed during the scoring session that if an assignment had not allowed for the student to show competence in all three, it didn't mean the student had no understanding; however, COAT could not make the leap that because an understanding of regional community was demonstrated that there too would have been a demonstration of engaging effectively in a global community had the assignment allowed for it. The COAT has a subcommittee working on the findings from this summer's assessment to make recommendations regarding the possible use of and/or in front of the word global in the rubric. COAT members in the Creative Arts and Humanities faculty found the rubric to still be based too heavily in course/discipline specifics: Political Science/Government

- o Committee actions and suggestions

    - o COAT informed the Discipline Leads of the results of the assessments. COAT will be having an "Assignment Alignment" workshop during the January 2014 Faculty Development Conference "Sharing Our Expertise." COAT also created an assignment alignment subcommittee. Discipline Leads were informed that they may send assignments to the committee anytime to see how they line-up with the COAT rubrics. COAT will make suggestions for improvement only if needed. COAT continues to point out the need for students be made aware of the rubrics.

    - o COAT will give the "Assignment Alignment" presentation at the 2014 Spring Associate Faculty "Collaborations" Conference.

    - o COAT, through the discipline leads, the Faculty Council Teaching and Learning Committee, Chairs, Writing Center and the Deans, will convey that although we met none of our goals for Social Responsibility a criterion will be targeted for improvement. Improvements will occur as follows:

- o Students must be given clear instructions.

    - o Faculty will be given opportunities through faculty development programs to learn new ways to think about teaching Social Responsibility. These opportunities will focus within as well as apart from their disciplines.

Personal Responsibility

Table 4: Personal Responsibility Summary

| N=198 papers | Inter-rater | Personal Responsibility | | | | Met |
| Categories | Reliability | Rating | | | | Standard |
		1	2	3	4	
Choices	77%	17%	28%	37%	18%	55%
Actions	68%	15%	24%	42%	18%	60%
Consequences	72%	22%	25%	36%	17%	53%
Overall	72%					

The Core Objective Assessment Team met to discuss the assessment data.

Goal: 70% of students assessed will rate a 3 (on a scale of 1-4) or higher for each criterion

Result: Goal per criterion not met

Continuous Improvement

- Inter-Rater Reliability Issues

    - o Committee members discussed that the lower scores for "Actions" could be related to inter-rater reliability issues rather than student performance. During

the training session, faculty discussed at length what to do in the case of examples in which the assignment didn't align with the measure. One assignment in particular required students to discuss a famous moment in the life of a civil rights leader. Some students were able to connect that moment to "Understanding Choices, Understanding Actions, and Understanding Consequences," other students were not. The assignment didn't specifically ask students to make that connection therefore many just wrote about the event. This brought up again the best practices issue regarding whether or not COAT members should have access to the prompts or not. The issue of using prompts continues to be split.

- Rubric Clean-up

  o Although this rubric did not prove to be as difficult as the Social Responsibility rubric, a COAT subcommittee is studying the findings from this summer's assessment to see if any changes need to be made to the rubric before it is used for assessment again in 2014-2015.

- Committee actions and suggestions

  o COAT members from the areas in Communication, Language, Philosophy, Cultures, Government, Political Science and American History will hold round-table presentations on "Assignment Alignment" at the spring 2014 Faculty Development Conference. COAT continues to suggest that faculty use the rubrics in their classes and to make students aware of the rubrics.

  o COAT through the discipline leads, the Faculty Council Teaching and Learning Committee, Chairs and the Deans, will convey that although the College met none of its goals for Personal Responsibility, the areas in Communication, Language, Philosophy, Cultures, Government, Political Science and American History need to create action plans of assessment based on improving student learning in the criterion "Understanding Choices." Other improvements that need to occur in this area are as follows:

  o Students must be given clear instructions.

  o Students need to have the rubric along with the assignment so that they know the criteria by which they will be assessed.

Teamwork
Table 5: Teamwork Summary

		Teamwork				
N=301 students from 65 teams		Rating				Met Standard
Categories	# of Ratings	1	2	3	4	
Meeting Contributions	1008	2%	4%	11%	83%	94%
Assignment Completion	1007	2%	8%	10%	80%	90%
Individual Management	1003	2%	4%	11%	82%	93%
Fosters Team Climate	999	2%	5%	7%	86%	93%
Conflict Resolution	1001	5%	9%	6%	80%	86%

301 individuals in 65 teams from 13 course sections rated fellow team members. A given individual had from 3-6 rating, depending on the size of the group, with an average of 3.34 ratings. Self-ratings and instructor ratings were not included in this analysis due to inconsistencies across groups. No protocol was used.

Goal: 70% of students assessed will rate a 3 (on a scale of 1-4) or higher for each criterion

Result: Goal per criterion met

Continuous Improvement

- Inter-Rater Reliability Issues

  - Early in the pilot process, COAT wondered how the team would actually assess the artifacts. The peer-review process was agreed upon as a process; however, no protocol was determined before or during the pilot.

- Rubric Clean-up/Peer-Review Form

  - A COAT sub-committee was formed to work on the peer-review form. Suggestions were made to include numbers for students to circle as well as a comment section under each criterion. These suggestions came from faculty and students that were part of the pilot.

- Committee actions and suggestions

  - COAT through the discipline leads, the Faculty Council Teaching and Learning Committee, Chairs and the Deans, will convey that although we met our goal, improvements will occur as follows:

> o COAT made the recommendation to improve the instrument used to assess Teamwork by creating a protocol.

Table 6: COAT Assessment Plan Year 1: 2013-2014

Core Objective	Measures	Modalities	# Sections Expected to be Assessed	# (Expected) Students Assessed	# (Expected) Assessed Students with 30 + Core
Social Responsibility	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Variety of Campuses	255	7300	243
Critical Thinking	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Honors, Variety of Campuses	217	5900	260
Teamwork	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Honors, Variety of Campuses	92	2650	562

Table 7: Objectives by Section: 2013-2014

Core Objective	Courses Chosen
Critical Thinking	MATH2413 (15 sections) PSYC2301 (16 sections) ENGL1301 (101 sections) HIST1301 (73 sections) PHYS1401 (12 sections)
Teamwork	ENVR1401 (21 sections) SPCH 1315 (24 sections) CHEM1411 (16 sections) MUSI1306 (31 sections)
Social Responsibility	HUMA1301 (73 sections) DRAM2361 (3 sections) GOVT 2305 (124 sections) SOCI1301 (55 sections)

Table 8: COAT Assessment Plan Year 2: 2014-2015

Core Objective	Measures	Modalities	# Sections Assessed	# (Expected) Students Assessed
Communication Skills	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Variety of Campuses		
Empirical & Quantitative Skills	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Honors, Variety of Campuses		
Personal Responsibility	Multiple*	Hybrid, Online, Night, Day, Express, Honors, Variety of Campuses		